



## MODULE 8

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### Case Study Germany (West Europe)

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### MODULE AIMS

- To understand the case of a destination country for migrants and refugees.
- To present selected context factors that attract record numbers of migrants and refugees.
- To sensitize to the human story behind the numbers.



### LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this module, in parallel to previous case studies so they are all internationally comparable, participants should be able:

- To thoughtfully debate migrants' choices and refugees' conclusions.  
→ **Affective LO: Responding**
- To communicate effectively what recipients need to know about migration and forced displacement so they are empowered to make informed decisions.  
→ **Cognitive LO: Understanding**
- To develop and implement a brief country profile and a brief profile on migration and forced displacement, using knowledge and databases.  
→ **Cognitive LO: Applying**
- To interpret Germany as a country of origin and destination for migrants and refugees. → **Cognitive LO: Analysing**

## Outline

The idea of Europe, according to the legend, goes back to Greek mythology and Princess Europa. Greek antiquity developed clear conceptions of the earth as consisting of three continents: Europe, Asia and Libya (Africa). The modern idea of Europe has changed with time. Initially, it was identified with three concepts: freedom, Christianity, and civilization. Later it was associated with diversity, democracy, and then with nationalism. Over time, the idea of a common identity leading to integration has come to the fore (e.g. Schmale, 2010). Contemporary (post World War II) European research on migration and forced displacement with a German focus comprises a variety of theoretical frameworks and foci, including forced displacements by European conflicts (e.g. the Yugoslav wars, Kosovo, Ukraine, Crimea); the migration of ethnic Germans<sup>1</sup> from Eastern European countries, so-called Aussiedler; the flight or migration from East to West Germany<sup>2</sup>; the so-called

1 The German government points out that it “acknowledges its responsibility to all the German minorities in Eastern Europe who faced special difficulties due to World War II, started by the Nazi Germany [...]. Ethnic German resettlers are Germans within the meaning of the Basic Law who return to the country of their ancestors to live there permanently” (BMI, 2020).

2 As Germany was divided into two sovereign states between 1949 and 1990, citizens from the German Democratic Republic (GDR, also known as East Germany) who fled to the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) are known as Übersiedler, noting their special status as Germans. After reunification these spatial movements became categorized as internal migration.

quota refugees (Kontingentflüchtlinge) from the former Soviet Union (120,000 Jewish refugees between 1990 and 1999; Dietz, 2000); the Gastarbeiter (guest workers), e.g. migrant workers who were recruited for a restricted time, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s – the term was adapted to various country contexts and languages but is no longer used in international institutional settings (EMN, 2018; Fassmann & Münz, 1994; Glorius, 2010; Hoerder, 1999; IOM, 2019a; Münz & Weiner, 1997; Panagiotidis, 2015). The latest reference point in current affairs for discussing matters of migrants and refugees in Europe and Germany have been the events of the years 2015/2016 when an unprecedented number of people tried to reach Europe – the largest inflow in 70 years (since the end of World War II in 1945). Germany, this module attempts to show, is a complex country case in regard to migration and forced displacement. The module also brings two groups to the fore which often escape the public eye, the elderly and children: The elderly are a major group in Germany – and, they are also a major group of international migrants (Migration Data Portal, 2021). Children migrants often reach Germany in unaccompanied ways.

## Country profile

Germany goes by different names in different languages. It is l'Allemagne in French, Germany in English and Deutschland in German – take this as an invitation to look into the country's history. What determines Germany still today is also the Nazi regime (1933 to 1945) and the Holocaust. Germans in their mid-80s and older remember dictatorship, war, destruction, expulsion and separation into two states.<sup>3</sup> This handbook is not the place to ably and responsibly do any justice to the pain these years have brought upon the world and Germany, with ramifications felt until today for individuals and the global system.

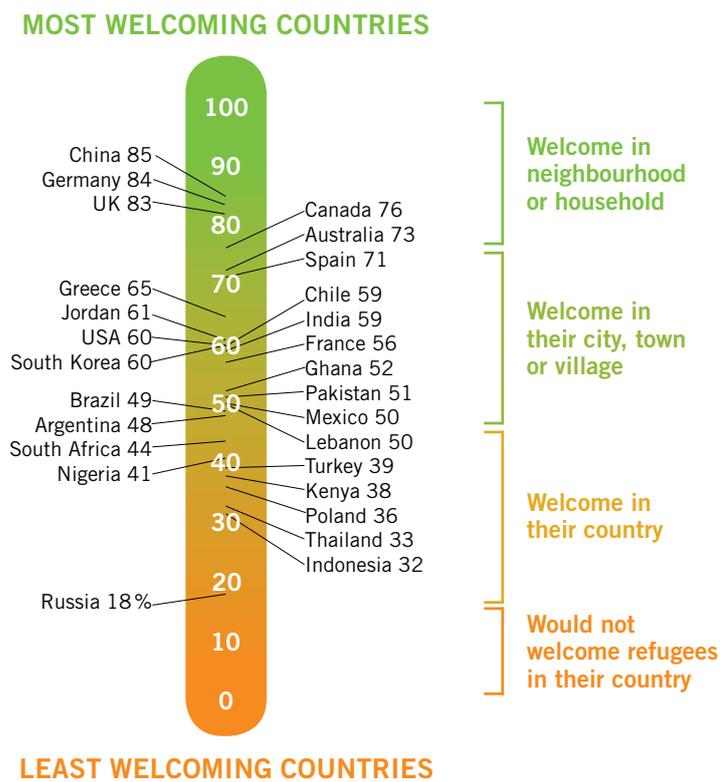
German citizens expect their presidents to find appropriate words and gestures to address the magnitude, based upon the presidents' party-political neutrality and their expected eminence as a source of “clarification, to dismantle prejudices, to articulate what is in the minds of the citizens, to influence public debate [...] [and to] make proposals” (Der Bundespräsident, 2020). In this capacity, some presidents have taken the debate to new frontiers: Richard von Weizsäcker famously told the German parliament during the Ceremony Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the End of War in Europe and of National-Socialist Tyranny on 8 May 1985 at the Bundestag, Bonn, that “the 8th of May [1945] was a day of liberation. It liberated all of us” (von Weizsäcker, 1985, p. 2). President Frank-Walter Steinmeier begged the Polish people's pardon for “Germany's historical guilt”: “I bow in grief before the victims' pain. [...] I recognize our enduring responsibility” (Steinmeier, 2019). Imagine that Germany never marked Refugee Day until President Joachim Gauck did in 2015, breaking the impasse in remembering post-World War II expellees from former German settlements in

3 The Multidimensional Remembrance Monitor (“MEMO”) regularly monitors the state of Germany's culture of remembrance. The researchers at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence at Bielefeld University, Germany, investigate the “persecution, displacement and annihilation of people and groups of people that took place during the time of National Socialism” (Zick et al., 2020, p. 3). When asked what they consider the most important event in German history, almost 50% of the respondents mentioned the German reunification, and almost 39% mentioned events from the context of National Socialism (Zick et al., 2020, p. 7).

Eastern Europe (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 2015). He spoke on 20 June 2015, the height of the refugee crisis. President Gauck started his speech by commemorating all those who have been uprooted, the “refugees and expellees, who have been forced into emigration”, in the past, present and future. He changed a paradigm when he continued to include German refugees and expellees of the past:

“For the first time, Germany is now marking an official national day of remembrance for the millions of Germans who were driven out of their homeland at the end of the Second World War. For the first time, therefore, the German Government is officially marking World Refugee Day, as adopted by the UN General Assembly fifteen years ago. For they belong together in a quite essential manner – the fate of people back then and the fate of people today, the grief and the expectations back then and the fears and hopes for the future of today. I wish the memory of those who fled or were expelled back then could enhance our understanding for those who have fled or been displaced today. And vice versa: our encounters with those who are uprooted today could enhance our empathy with those who were uprooted back then” (Gauck, 2015).

Figure 21: Amnesty International: Refugees Welcome Index 2016



Amnesty International's Refugees Welcome Index 2016 ranks 27 countries across all continents based on people's willingness to let refugees live in their countries, towns, neighbourhoods and homes. Source: Amnesty International (2016b). Own illustration.

The German people and many civil society organizations, often supported by the media, prepared and implemented what is known as the ‘Refugees Welcome’ culture (in German: Willkommenskultur). In Amnesty International’s global survey, Germany turned out to be the second strongest “refugees welcome”-culture worldwide (Amnesty International, 2016a; Amnesty International, 2016b; see Figure 21). How this resonated with migrants and refugees is the focus of their own reflections (Welcome Democracy, n.d.) and of research (see Module 4).

Reunification in 1990 transformed Germany into one of the largest countries in the EU<sup>4</sup> in regard to land area (ca. 350,000 km<sup>2</sup>) and population size (83 million in 2020;<sup>5</sup> UNdata, 2020). Germany assumes rank 4 in the category “very high human development” of the HDI, and has maintained this high standard over the years 2013-2018; UNDP, 2019b, p. 304).

Germany has a negative annual population growth rate (-0.06 %; 2020-2025), down from circa 0.5 % in the preceding five year interval (UNDESA, 2019b, p. 65). Statistically, the fertility rate has been increasing slightly for two decades from 1.3 live births per woman (1990-1995) to 1.6 (2020-2025; UNDESA, 2019b, pp. 144-145). Life expectancy has risen steadily, and it is now close to 80 years for men and 84 for women (UNDESA, 2019b, p. 213). This profiles an ageing society with an old-age dependency ratio of 44<sup>6</sup> projected for 2030 (UNDP, 2019b, p. 343). Germany spends less on health than its peers in the very high human development-group of the HDI and the OECD (11.1 % of the GDP in Germany versus over 12 % in the two groups; UNDP, 2019a, pp. 6-9), and slightly less on education (4.8 % of GDP versus 4.9 % in the very high human development-group of the HDI and 5 % in the OECD; UNDP, 2019a, pp. 10-13). The percentage of school-age youth enrolled in tertiary education is at 68 % clearly lower than the average in very high human development-countries (79 %) and the OECD (75 %; UNDP, 2019a, pp. 10-13). Nonetheless, Germans have the highest skill level (5.79 versus 4.02 in countries of very high human development and 3.70 in OECD countries; UNDP, 2019a, pp. 18-21), which may point to high standards in Germany’s vocational education. Employment largely occurs in services in Germany as well as in other very high human development-countries and the OECD (over 70 % of all employment; UNDP, 2019a, pp. 18-21). Trade accounts for over 87 % of Germany’s GDP which is very high compared to the reference groups which range between 56 % and 62 %. Foreign direct investments (FDI; 2.6 % of GDP) and private capital flows (4.7 %) are high in Germany (FDI in very high human development countries: 1.2 %, OECD: 0.9 %; private capital flows: 0.1/0; all data from 2018; UNDP, 2019a, pp. 26-29).

4 Data for 2020 (population) and 2017 (land area): France: 550.000 km<sup>2</sup> with over 65 million people. Italy: 302,000 km<sup>2</sup> with over 60 million people; Spain: 500,000 km<sup>2</sup> with 47 million people; UK: 243.000 km<sup>2</sup> with 68 million people (UNdata, 2020).

5 Numbers and decimals are rounded in this text, keeping a good balance between accuracy and readability.

6 Definition of old-age dependency ratio: The ratio of the population ages 65 years and older to the working age population (aged 15-64). Japan tops the list with an old-age dependency ratio of 53.2, followed by Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Finland, Hong Kong (UNDP, 2019b, pp. 343-347).

In 2020, over 83 million people – a new record high – were living in Germany (UNDESA, 2019b, p. 39). The Federal Statistical Office summarizes that since reunification, “the country’s population has mainly been growing [...]. This population growth has exclusively been due to net immigration. Without the migration surplus, the population would have fallen since 1972 because more people died than were born in each year ever since” (Destatis, 2020d).

### **The ageing society**

While in 1990, 13% of the German population was 67 years and older (19% in 2020), this age group will more than double by 2050 and then represent 27% of the total German population (Destatis, 2020c).<sup>7</sup> The trend of populations ageing as life expectancies increase is global: For the first time in 2018, there were more people over 64 years than children younger than five years (Ritchie & Roser, 2019).

The ageing of society is a key aspect in the migration-demography nexus and has been discussed as such for decades (Marois et al., 2020; UNDESA, 2001). One key to assessing the challenge and/or dividend of the youth and the elderly is the age dependency ratio that shows how the non-working population compares to the workforce, e.g. the ratio of younger or older people to the working-age population (those between 15 and 64 years). In Germany, the youth dependency ratio dropped from 32% in 1960 to 20% in 2017 while the age dependency ratio rose from 17% in 1960 to 33% in 2017 (Ritchie & Roser, 2019) – almost an inverted pyramid.

An aggregate of 1.6 million people (9%) of the generation older than 66 years had a migrant background<sup>8</sup> in 2014. Only a minority (23,000 or 1.6% of all migrants in 2014) migrated to Germany at old age, of whom most were returning Germans (6,000), besides EU citizens in addition to elderly coming from Turkey and Syria (Destatis, 2016, pp. 11-13). Scholars have inquired migration of older people for instance from the perspectives of equality, justice and social inclusion (Ciobanu et al., 2016; Westwood, 2019), and successful ageing (Jopp et al., 2015).

### **Migration profile**

The complexities of Germany’s migration history compare to other countries, which still struggle with unresolved issues from World War II, like South Korea (the Republic of Korea) and North Korea (the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea). The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) was founded to address the magnitude of forced displacements in the aftermath of World War II. Germany was a major scene with seven million displaced persons and 12 million German refugees. Former forced labourers of the

7 In the global context, the number of people aged 65 and above is rising and stood at around 9% of the world population in 2019. Japan has the oldest population worldwide representing 28% of its population, clearly above the average of high-income and OECD countries (18%; World Bank, 2020).

8 Migrant background in this context comprises people who moved to Germany after 1950, are descendants of migrants, or have a foreign citizenship (Destatis, 2019, p. 11).

Nazi regime and prisoners of the notorious death camps (concentration camps) migrated to the United Kingdom, United States of America, Israel or even remained close to home, choosing East or West Germany (Möhring, 2015, pp. 369-370). The UNHCR was mandated to address the extraordinary needs. This phase of war adjustment (1945-1954) is the first of four phases which Schmidt & Zimmermann (1992) identify in Germany's recent migration history. Phases two and three comprise the beginning and the end of the active recruitment of manpower (Gastarbeiter, 1955-1974) with around 14 million foreign workers, mainly from Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and former Yugoslavia<sup>9</sup> of whom, over time, 11 million returned home (Bauer et al., 2005, pp. 199-200; Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016, p. 3). Two other ethnic groups bridged phases two and three: Ethnic Germans repatriating from Eastern European countries to West Germany (Aussiedler) and East Germans who managed, often risking their lives, to get into West Germany (Übersiedler). Phase four of the recent German migration history comprised the dissolution of Communist governance in Europe, effected the extinction of a country – East Germany – and the reunification of the two Germanys in 1990.

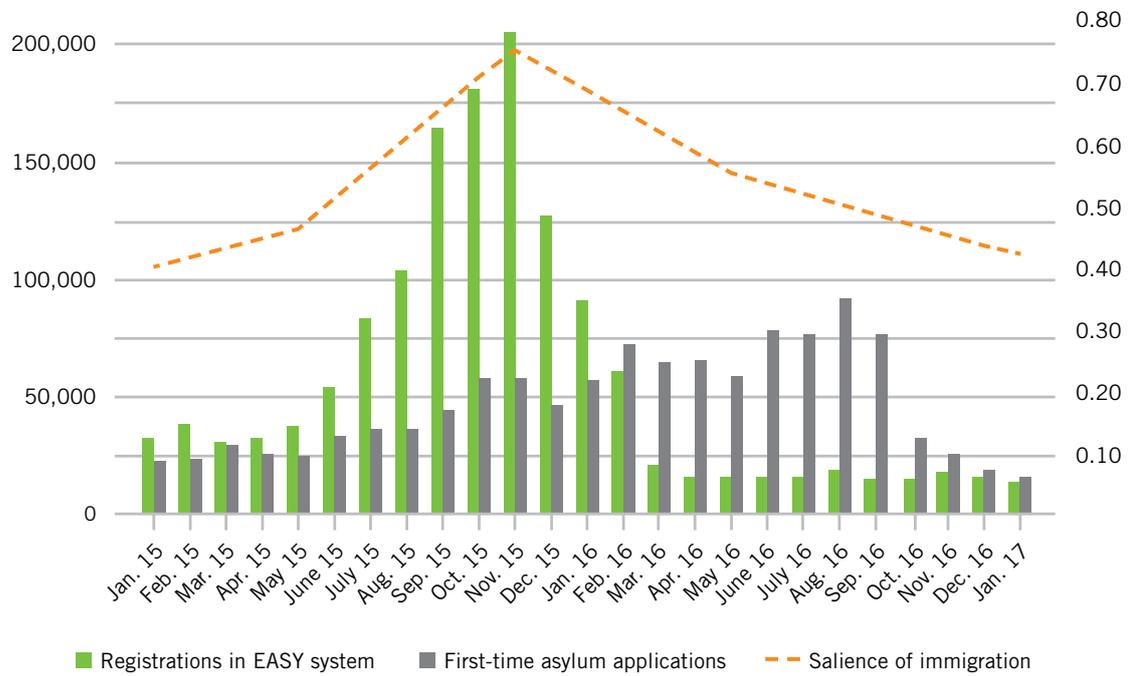
Starting in May 1989, mass escape from the former socialist German Democratic Republic (GDR) via Hungary, the former Czechoslovakia and Austria to West Germany – caused by a lack of freedoms, electoral fraud, poor economic performance etc. – contributed to the end of the GDR. Only a few weeks earlier, when Chris Gueffroy was shot-to-kill in his attempted escape from East to West Germany, few anticipated that he would be the last victim of one of the world's most fortified borders of the Cold War (1945-1990), the Berlin Wall (Lüpke-Schwarz, 2014). Recalling that the Communist countries during the Cold War severely restricted the emigration of their citizens, only rare cases were granted permission to travel to places behind the iron curtain, e.g. emigrating from the socialist republics. Unauthorized departure was a crime, punishable under the Penal Code Article 213, and the National Defence Council ordered border guards to shoot those perceived as defectors (Goodman, 1996, p. 733, p. 746). Nonetheless, during the German separation into two states between 1949 and 1990, around four million East Germans managed to migrate to the West (Ulrich, 1990, p. 3). Contrary to the GDR, West Germany retained the view of one German citizenship (Möhring, 2015, p. 398). On 3 October 1990, the two Germanys reunited in one state after some 40 years of separation.

A new phase heralded in the 2010s, unprecedented in many ways, despite Germany's abounding recent history of migration and forced displacement: In June 2015, the numbers of migrants and refugees in Europe and Germany from neighbouring world regions jumped. For the first time, over 50,000 people were registered who intended to apply for asylum in Germany, enrolled through the EASY<sup>10</sup> system which refers to the initial distribution of asylum seekers in Germany. In August 2015, the EASY numbers exceeded the 100,000 mark, in September of the same year 150,000 and in November 200,000 (Sola, 2018, p. 7; see Figure 22).

9 The labour recruitment agreements with Greece, Italy, former Yugoslavia, Portugal, Spain, Turkey that were signed between 1955 (Italy) and 1968 (former Yugoslavia) were discontinued in 1973. The number of foreign employees subject to social security contributions is not clear from German official statistics (Destatis, 2020a) but are said to have been as high as 14 million (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016).

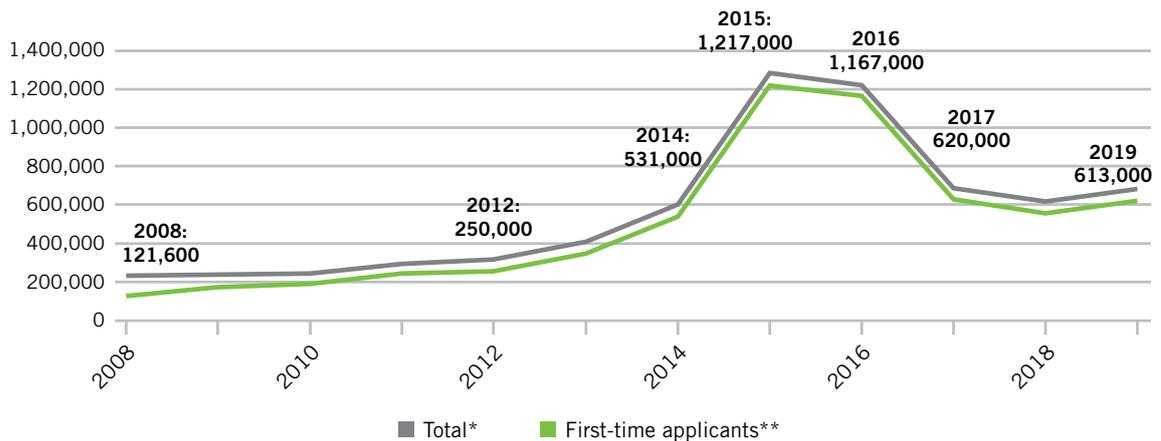
10 The acronym stands for the initial distribution of asylum seekers, in German "Erstverteilung der Asylbegehrenden (EASY)".

**Figure 22: Arrivals of asylum seekers and salience of immigration in Germany**



The numbers of people who intended to apply for asylum in Germany jumped from over 50,000 in August 2015 to over 200,000 within the next three months. Source: Sola (2018, p. 7). Own illustration.

**Figure 23: Number of first-time asylum applicants (non-EU-27 citizens) in the EU, 2008-2019**



\*2008-2014: Croatia not available. \*\*2008: Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Slovakia and Finland not available. 2009: Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Slovakia and Finland not available. 2010: Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria, Romania and Finland not available. 2011: Croatia, Hungary, Austria and Finland not available. 2012: Croatia, Hungary and Austria not available. 2013: Austria not available.

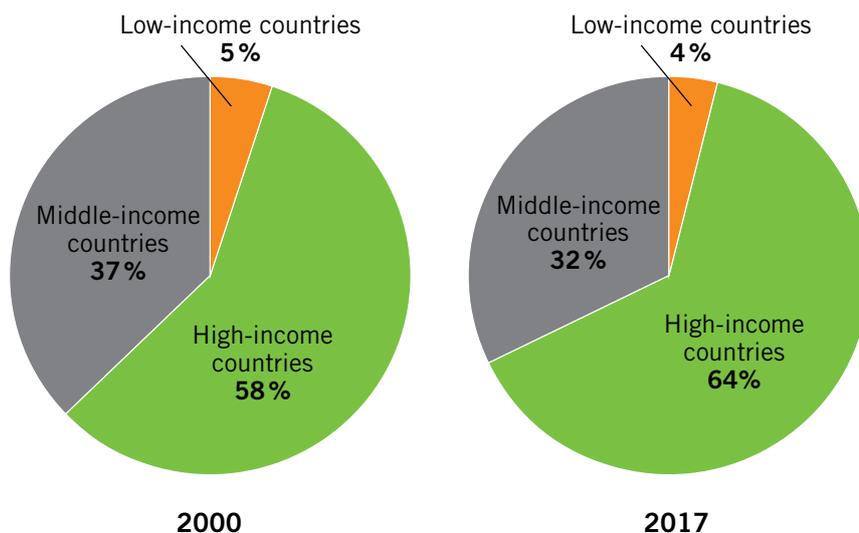
The number of asylum applications in Europe increased to a record high in 2015. Note that figure 23 uses the numbers of first-time applicants (green line) and not the total number (grey line) in order to presumably better reflect numbers of new arrivals. Source: Eurostat (2020a). Own illustration.

Almost 2.5 million asylum seekers submitted their applications for the first time in the EU in 2015 and 2016 – more than the entire population of Guinea-Bissau, one of this handbook’s case studies (see Module 6). Looking only at those who submitted their claims for the first time shows that the numbers more than doubled from 2008 to 2012, re-doubled by 2014, and then exceeded the 1 million-threshold in 2015 and in 2016. The numbers fell by 50% in 2017, and increased again in 2019 to a level higher than the high level of 2014 (Eurostat, 2020a; see Figure 23).

Most asylum seekers in the EU were registered in Germany, in 2019 as in previous years. With over 142,000 applicants registered in 2019, Germany accounted for 23% of all first-time applicants in the EU (France: 20%, Spain: 19%, Greece: 12%, Italy: 6%; Eurostat, 2020a). Migrants increasingly choose high income countries as their destination (see Module 6, Module 7/Gender, Module 9) – the share grew from 58% in 2000 to 64% in 2017; in parallel, the share of middle-income and low-income countries decreased (UNDESA, 2017, p. 4; see Figure 24). Germany (rank 4 of 189 countries in the HDI, see above) is a top choice and takes third place as a destination country after the USA and Saudi Arabia (UNDESA, 2017, p. 6, Figure 3). This development is in line with a trend observed in Africa whereby the proportion of migrants moving to other African countries has decreased between 1990 and 2017, and the proportion of people leaving the continent has increased (UNDESA, 2017, pp. 11-12; Connor, 2018; see Module 9).

Recalling that the statistical UN definition of international migrants as reflected in the UN chart above does not differentiate between migrants and refugees (Module 2), the country of destination

**Figure 24: Percentage of international migrants by income group, 2000 and 2017**

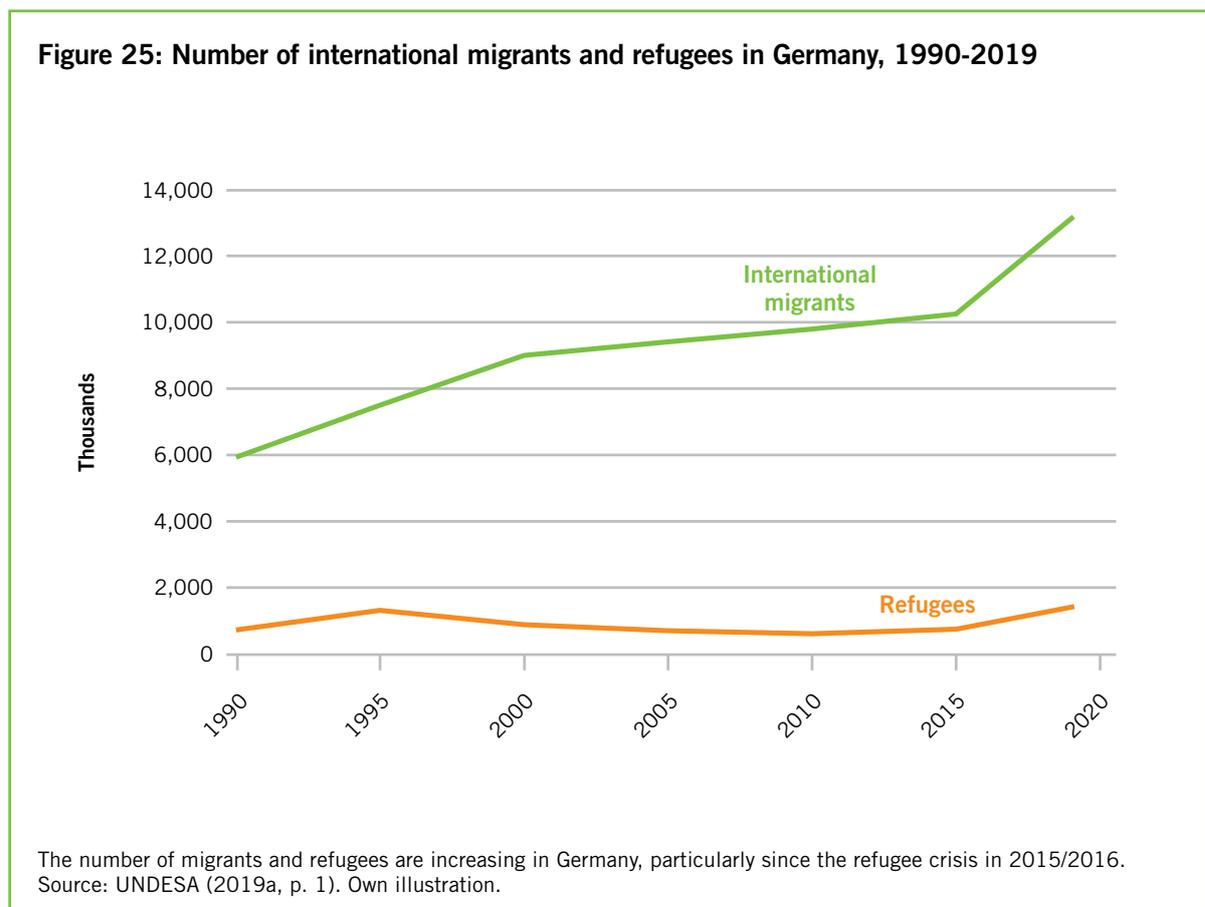


Note: For both charts, the classifications of countries and areas by income level is based on 2016 gross national income (GNI) per capita, in US dollars, calculated by the World Bank.

Source: UNDESA (2017, p. 4). Own illustration.

for migrants on the one side and for refugees on the other side may not necessarily coincide, and this is indeed the case: While the USA, Saudi Arabia and Germany have been the top three destination countries for migrants in 2000 and 2017 (UNDESA, 2017, p. 6, Figure 3), only Germany is also as a top country hosting refugees – along with Turkey, Pakistan, Uganda and Sudan in 2017 and 2018 (UNHCR, 2018, p. 3; UNHCR, 2019, p. 3). Reviewing the past decade (2000-2019), just Pakistan, Germany and Iran maintained positions in the top 10 refugee hosting countries at both the beginning and the end of the decade (UNHCR, 2020a, p. 22). Of these, Germany represents a distant destination for most refugees whereas geographic proximity is usually an important factor for people fleeing conflict and persecution: Syrians have mostly fled to Turkey, Lebanon or Jordan; in sub-Saharan Africa, the number of refugees in the region nearly tripled in the course of the decade – situations that represent “an urgent need for sharing the burden and responsibility of hosting and caring for refugees more equitably” (UNDESA, 2017, pp. 7-8; Module 9). To get to German borders, refugees and migrants must surmount agonizing natural obstacles with the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea in addition to hazards like human traffickers.

The numbers of migrants and refugees in Germany have been rising consistently since the 1990s, as Figure 25 shows.



The large numbers of refugees and migrants in 2015-2016 prompted the EU-Turkey agreement that was reached in March 2016. The aim was to “end the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU [...] which is necessary to end the human suffering and restore public order” (European Council, 2016). The partners agreed to return from Europe to Turkey all migrants who were not in need of international protection and who were crossing from Turkey into the EU-member state Greece, as well as to take back all irregular migrants intercepted in Turkish waters; measures against migrant smugglers would be stepped up. For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from Greece, it was also agreed, another Syrian would be resettled from Turkey to the EU. Turkey looked forward to accelerated EU-visa liberalisation for its citizens and to re-energised commitments to its accession to the EU. The EU pledged €6 billion in support of concrete projects for refugees and their host communities in Turkey, notably in the field of health, education, infrastructure, food and other living costs (European Council, 2016). Two years on, in April 2018, the EU celebrated the agreement with Turkey as a “game changer” with immediate effects: The number of deaths in the Aegean Sea had decreased from 1,175 in the 20 months before the deal to 130 by April 2018. The number of arrivals in the EU had subsided from a daily average of 6,360 in October 2015 to 80 between March 2016 and 2018 (European Commission, 2018). Human rights organizations like Amnesty International criticized the deal as “Europe’s year of shame” (Gogou, 2017). Four years after the Agreement, on 27 February 2020, Turkey discontinued the controls at its borders to Greece, and thousands of migrants restarted their movements towards Europe. The Turkish decision did not come as a surprise, but the trigger at that moment is said to have been the killing of 36 Turkish soldiers in a raid by Syrian government forces in the Syrian city of Idlib, one hour drive from the Turkish border (Dagi, 2020; Mandiraci, 2020).

While most first-time asylum applicants in Germany come from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan (Eurostat, 2020b), they are not alone. 11.2 million foreigners were living in Germany by the end of 2019 (an increase of 313,000 individuals or 2.9% compared to 2018). In 2019, most foreigners from non-EU countries originated in Turkey (1.5 million people), Syria (789,000) and Afghanistan (263,000). 43% of all registered foreigners are EU-citizens, mostly from Poland, Romania and Italy (Destatis, 2020b). Migrants<sup>11</sup> from sub-Saharan Africa outnumber migrants from North Africa, and the share of migrants from Africa is growing (from 57% in 2012 to 69% in 2019; Destatis, 2019, pp. 23-24, Table 3).

Naturally, most irregular migration takes place underneath the radar of those who count migrants and refugees. It is this group whose lives are most at risk. Irregular attempts to enter Europe via the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea are extremely hazardous. Nonetheless, 93% of African migrants “would make the perilous Europe journey again, despite the risks” (UN News,

<sup>11</sup> Note that the reference groups in these statistics are foreigners (“Ausländerinnen und Ausländer”). They are defined as all persons who do not have German citizenship (Destatis, 2019, p. 7).

2019), a conclusion drawn from the “Scaling fences” report (UNDP, 2019c). Respondents<sup>12</sup> in this study highlighted irregular migration as an investment in a better future, and just 2% said that a greater awareness of the risks of the irregular migration journey would have caused them to stay at home. The research confirms that migrants are taking calculated risks, comparing the potential gains and losses of migration with those of staying at home (UNDP, 2019c, p. 5).

Given that data on arrivals in Europe can only be partial due to the large scale of irregular movements, sex and age disaggregated data for 2018 show that men mostly arrive with considerable numbers of unaccompanied children (unaccompanied and separated children, UASC), particularly in Italy (83%), Spain, (81%) and Bulgaria (54%; UNHCR, UNICEF, & IOM, 2019, p. 2).

Germans themselves do not migrate in big numbers: Only 270,000 Germans left the country in 2019, mostly to Switzerland (16,000), Austria (12,000) and the USA (10,000; Destatis, 2020e). These moves confirm again that migration routinely flows in spatial or cultural proximity (see Module 3, Module 9).



**SUGGESTION FOR AN EXERCISE TO ADDRESS THE COGNITIVE SKILLS OF APPLYING AND ANALYSING AND THE AFFECTIVE SKILLS OF RESPONDING:**

Allow the class to acquire some knowledge of Germany as a current destination country for migrants and refugees – and as a country of refugees’ origin in the past.

Invite participants to prepare two short profiles: one country profile and one profile on migration and forced displacement in Germany.

- To compose these two profiles, participants select their data from the sources shown in Module 2, particularly the Migration Data Portal country page on Germany (2020c).
- To bring the data to life, participants explore media reports from or about Germany, which they consider enlightening and telling.
- Present the two profiles in plenary and conclude with five highlights to identify the top characteristics for Germany.

**SUGGESTION FOR THE CLASSROOM TO ADDRESS THE COGNITIVE SKILLS OF UNDERSTANDING:**

Task the participants to describe which aspects of the country profile and the country’s profile on migration and forced displacement are relevant for their audiences so the audiences’ new knowledge empowers them to make informed decisions.

<sup>12</sup> The primary sample comprised of 1,970 irregular migrants from 39 African countries who had not travelled for asylum or protection-related reasons and who had cited economic or other reasons as their most important reason for coming to Europe (UNDP, 2019c, p. 16).

## Unaccompanied children in the EU: the invisible

Children are mostly defined by the age group under 18 years, using the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The numbers of migrant children rose moderately from around 24 million in 1990 to 27 million in 2010 and then distinctly to 33 million by 2019 (Migration Data Portal, 2020a). Globally, there are approximately 13 million child refugees and 936,000 asylum-seeking children, and 17 million children who have been forcibly displaced inside their own countries (IOM, 2019b, p. 238). Unaccompanied children seeking asylum in Europe in 2018 mostly came from Afghanistan (16%), Eritrea (10%), Syria, Pakistan (7% each), Iraq, Guinea (6% each) and Somalia (5%; UNHCR et al., 2019, p. 4). Of all asylum decisions taken in 2018, 56% were positive. Of those who received positive decisions, a higher percentage of children were granted refugee status in 2018 (63%) than in 2017 (50%). Child asylum applicants receiving negative decisions were mostly from North African countries (UNHCR et al., 2019, p. 4).

Children usually derive their immigration status from their parents. However, children unaccompanied by guardians migrate in increasing numbers to Europe and further onwards to Germany. In 2015, there were five times as many children estimated migrating alone than in 2010-2011. Accordingly, the number of unaccompanied children applying for asylum has increased (Migration Data Portal, 2020a). In 2018, nearly one third of all new asylum seekers in Europe were children (191,000 out of 603,000) including over 20,000 unaccompanied children; most of them claimed asylum in Germany (78,270 in 2018; UNHCR et al., 2019, p. 4).

Ferrara et al. (2016) write of the “invisible children” whose human rights are inscribed in the CRC. Roudik (2017) surveyed the laws of 20 jurisdictions globally that are related to the treatment of undocumented migrants who arrived as minors, their eligibility for obtaining legal status and access to social benefits, and their possibilities for becoming citizens. While focusing on children of undocumented (irregular) migrants<sup>13</sup>, the report also outlines laws related to unaccompanied child migrants. In Italy, for instance, “Law No. 47 of 2017 was enacted to protect foreign minors who enter Italy without an adult by recognizing the same rights for them that Italian and EU-minors have [...]. Foreign unaccompanied minors may never be rejected at the border, and refoulement and expulsion are prohibited” (Roudik, 2017, pp. 46-47). In 2020, the crisis of unaccompanied migrant children reached its peak when they were living in overcrowded reception centres on the Greek islands during the Covid-19 pandemic (Psaropoulos, 2020; Schmitz, 2020; UNHCR, 2020b).

### Pull factor: welfare magnet

Refugee benefits in Germany are “quite high,” and Germany is allocating more than other EU members, Germany’s Interior Minister said when calling for an EU-wide agreement on the amount of benefits that refugees receive (Staudenmaier, 2017). Euronews with Reuters (Trevelyan & Gareth,

<sup>13</sup> For definitions, see glossaries recommended in Module 2 (IOM, 2019a; EMN, 2018).

2015) prepared a synopsis of benefits for migrants in EU member states which was diverse at the time. In Germany, services vary from state to state, and even from city to city. The German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF; BAMF, 2020) informs migrants and refugees in Germany about matters concerning residence, integration, protection, voluntary return, etc. The EU Immigration Portal provides hands-on information about procedures in all EU member states (European Commission, 2020a).

The welfare magnet is often assumed to be a major pull factor from countries with less developed welfare systems to countries with refined welfare systems like Germany. Public worries about welfare migration are being voiced, with migrants and asylum seekers assumed to be benefiting from social services such as free provision of health, education, food (or money to buy it), shelter, access to interpreters and lawyers, etc. Other German publics argue that the asylum process leaves the applicants in a situation where they are dependent on welfare benefits. These issues are being addressed in research, institutional reports, and public debate. The Oxford philosopher David Miller – in his book “Strangers in Our Midst” (2016) – analyses the issue from a normative framework that aims to identify political solutions; for a German contextualization of Miller’s philosophy, see Bieber (2017). The Economist (2018) sees “welfare chauvinism” on the rise.

Skill level is researched as an important determinant of immigrants’ welfare appreciation, with higher-skilled immigrants being less dependent than their lower-skilled peers (Giulietti & Wahba, 2012). A generous welfare system attracts lower-skilled migration while demand-driven migration policy draws more skilled migrants according to Razin & Wahba (2011). Ponce (2018) contrasts the welfare magnet with the hypothesis of inclusion and found that migrants are pulled by the promise of social and political inclusion, and to places where their co-ethnics have become fully-fledged citizens.

### **Pull factor: safe haven**

Germany, 75 years after the end of the Nazi tyranny and 30 years after reunification, has successfully completed its transition to democracy (see above, Outline). A 2019 survey showed that 99% of respondents expressed their appreciation for the democratic model of governance over autocracy (Decker et al., 2020). The study also shows that the majority of Germans are dissatisfied with the way the system proceeds, particularly in regard to social and economic policies. It is perhaps in line with these perceptions that Germany only ranks 17 out of 156 countries in the World Happiness Index (Helliwell et al., 2020). The country is a top performer in all global rankings of freedoms: Besides its high rank 4 on the HDI (see above), Germany retains rank 13 out of 167 countries in the category “full democracy” of the Democracy Index (EIU, 2020); press freedom earns Germany rank 11 out of 180 countries (Reporters Without Borders, 2020); corruption penetration is low as rank 9 out of 180 countries denotes (Transparency International, 2020); security is high, given rank 17 out of 163 countries on the Global Peace Index (IEP, 2019), and risks are generally low as rank

162 out of 181 countries on the World Risk Index reveals, which takes the impact of Covid-19 into consideration (Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft, & IFHV, 2020, pp. 6-7, p. 25, pp. 59-60).

Asylum is one of the few legal ways to get access to Europe. EU member states have different traditions for granting and withdrawing refugee status. The EU has been working, since 1999, towards creating a “Common European Asylum System” (CEAS) with the aim of harmonizing protection and reception standards. The “New Pact on Migration and Asylum” (European Commission, 2020b) draws conclusions from the 2015/2016 refugee crisis, aiming to “build a new system that manages and normalizes migration for the long term and which is fully grounded in European values and international law” (European Commission, 2020b, p. 1). The new approach comprises policies of migration, asylum, integration and border management. It aims to “reduce unsafe and irregular routes and promote [...] safe legal pathways into Europe for those who need protection” (European Commission, 2020b, p. 2) The new approach is meant to manage the interdependence between the various policies and decisions of the EU member states in the spirit of “solidarity and responsibility sharing” (European Commission, 2020b, pp. 5-6). The needs of children have been identified as a priority. Migrants “who have no right to stay” will be returned “swiftly” and “effectively”, and voluntary returns will be promoted (see Module 6). Currently, only one third of people ordered to return from a EU member states actually leave, which “erodes citizens’ trust in the whole system of asylum and migration management” (European Commission, 2020b, p. 7).

In Germany, besides the ‘Refugees Welcome’ culture (see above, Outline), the increasing support for right-wing parties and the presumed general German public’s disapproval of migrants have made international headlines (Al Jazeera, 2019; Bennhold & Eddy, 2020; Eddy, 2015; France24, 2017). A representative survey measuring the integration climate in Germany has, however, shown that the German citizens’ attitudes to refugees are predominantly positive (SVR, 2018). Germans, with and without a migration background, were surveyed, including ethnic German resettlers (Aussiedler), people of Turkish descent, and migrants from the EU and the rest of the world. The majority of respondents believe that refugees enrich the country culturally and economically. 60% of those without a migration background believe that Germany should continue to receive refugees, even if it were the only EU member state to do so. Results vary across migrant groups, with the highest level of agreement registered among people of Turkish descent; ethnic German resettlers are “markedly more cautious” (SVR, 2018, p. 1). Sola (2017) concludes from his survey conducted during the peak of the refugee crisis, from June 2015 until the end of that year: The concerns among the German population increased by 22% compared to the pre-refugee crisis level which he evaluates as “substantial” (Sola, 2018, p. 1). In light of all of the above, Germany is one of the most immigrant accepting countries, retaining rank 24 of 140 countries in the Gallup Migrant Acceptance Index (Fleming et al., 2018). The authors conclude that “somewhat surprisingly, the countries whose recent elections were marked by considerable anti-immigrant rhetoric – the USA, the UK, the Netherlands, France, and Germany – are all among the most accepting of migrants” (Fleming et al., 2018, p. 116).



### **SUGGESTION FOR AN EXERCISE TO ADDRESS THE COGNITIVE SKILLS OF APPLYING AND ANALYSING AND THE AFFECTIVE SKILLS OF RESPONDING:**

Assign participants to identify and outline two selected context factors – two push factors or two pull factors or a combination of one each – for Germany.

- In order to identify two context factors, participants use Module 3 of this handbook, and will ideally also introduce new context factors as the listing in Module 3 is not inclusive.
- Participants explore media reports or testimonials to bring to life the conditions that prompted Germans in the past to leave their homes, as well as the conditions that are prevalent in the lives of migrants and refugees in Germany today.
- Participants will attempt, when presenting their selected context factors in plenary, to strike a balance between theory and the human element behind the theory.



### **SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENT TO ADDRESS THE AFFECTIVE SKILLS OF RESPONDING AND THE COGNITIVE SKILLS OF APPLYING:**

Ask your participants to evaluate Germany as a destination country for migrants and refugees.

- Consult the resources that have been introduced, for instance the Migration Data Portal (Migration Data Portal, 2020b), the Human Development Indicators (UNDP, 2019a) or media reports (The New Humanitarian, 2020).
- Present the refugees' and migrants' countries of origin. Outline the factors that pull refugees to seek refuge and migrants to seek better life opportunities in Germany.
- Make the situations of refugees and migrants in Germany palpable for people in other world regions – use photos, videos or other media.

### **SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENT TO ADDRESS THE COGNITIVE SKILLS OF UNDERSTANDING AND ANALYSING:**

Provide a report about migration and forced displacement in Germany, using local and/or international media. Each participant should elaborate on important aspects in these reports that are relevant to the audiences, empowering them to make informed decisions about migration and forced displacement.



### RECOMMENDED READING:

#### Academic:

Geddes, A., & Scholten, P. (2018). *The politics of migration and immigration in Europe* (2nd ed.) London: Sage.

#### Journalistic:

Casey, R. (2019). The two contrasting sides of German refugee policy: 'They try to integrate some people while really try to get rid of others'. *The New Humanitarian*. Retrieved December 1, 2020, from <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2019/11/11/German-refugee-integration-policy>

#### Institutional:

BAMF (2020). *Putting people first: providing security, creating opportunities, embracing change*. Retrieved December 2, 2020, from [https://www.bamf.de/EN/Startseite/startseite\\_node.html](https://www.bamf.de/EN/Startseite/startseite_node.html)

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